No Contest in Bid-Rigging Case
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Status of Straits Oil Pipelines Sought
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Josh Greenberg’s “Rivers of Sand”
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Feral Swine Ruling Challenged
Page 3

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Page 6
Encana Oil and Gas USA has agreed to a $5 million civil settlement with Ingham County Circuit Court and includes the following key terms:

* The company will pay $5 million to the State of Michigan. 
* The company will go to funds managed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and affected by Encana’s actions, and the remaining $2.5 million will fund the state’s anti-trust enforcement activities. 
* The company will enter into a four-year “corporate integrity agreement” with the state as part of a consent judgment, providing increased transparency of future oil and gas lease bidding activity. 
* State officials, in turn, agreed to an 11-month delayed sentence on the attempt charge, and the dismissal of the high court misdemeanor conviction relating to a contract or conspiracy. If Encana abides by the terms of the plea agreement, the criminal case will be dismissed after 11 months.

Public auctions of state-held oil and gas leases are held twice yearly—once in May and once in October—by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. During the DNRC’s May 2010 auction, both Chesapeake and Encana purchased natural gas leases in Michigan. In 2012, Reuters News Service uncovered a possible conspiracy between the two companies’ executives, discussing an agreement following the May 2010 auction to... (Continued on Page 2)

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** The following book review originally appeared online at the Northern Michigan Conservation Network website. It holds particular interest for North Woods Call readers and is reprinted here by permission.

**By Dave Smethurst**

The last Saturday in April is always a special day to trout fishermen. It’s the Trout Opener. Even though today it is more of a tradition that an event, with so many streams open—some under special regulations—I think you can fish for trout somewhere every day of the year. Nonetheless, it is deep in our trout bum brains that this is still a special day.

Maybe more than any recent opening days, I’m excited. I recently finished a new book that got me thinking, smiling and optimistic. Josh Greenburg, owner of one of the iconic fishing lodges and shops in the country—Gates Au Sable Lodge outside of Grayling—has written a wonderful new book, “River of Sand: Fly Fishing Michigan and The Great Lakes Region.” Written in what seems to me to be a conversational style, it is a book of stories about Josh’s fishing trips—alone, with clients, or with friends. There are three things I really like about this book that make it along with “Spring Creek” by Nick Lyons—one of my all-time favorites, both to be read and re-read. I’m a “seasoned” trout angler. I usually catch fish, unless I’m distracted by, oh, cedar waxwings in a spinner fall of mayflies, or a turtle inspecting my boots as I sit on a log (a small one, not a big snapper), or an... (Continued on Page 2)

**Printin the Pump**

The summer tourist season will soon be in full swing, pumping much-needed tourist revenue into northern Michigan’s economy. Although we prefer less-crowded roadways and parks—such as this temporarily empty rest stop along M-37 in western Wexford County—we recognize that businesses in the north woods welcome the lucrative influx of visitors this time of year. All we ask is that those passing through respect our natural resources, enjoy their travels and drive safely.

**LiquID PIPELINE:** A recent report by Maude Barlow of the Council of Canadians describes efforts to establish the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River as a “carbon corridor” for the North American energy industry. According to an online posting by Ted Schettler of the Science and Environmental Health Network, Barlow’s report details plans to transport “dangerous new forms of energy”—as well as waste from more traditional forms—“around, under and on the water.” It is also a call to action to stop these plans before it is too late, Schettler said.

**WOLF PETITIONS:** A second ballot proposal aimed at stopping gray wolf hunting in the Upper Peninsula will appear on the Nov. 5 ballot. Election officials said enough valid signatures have been collected to advance the proposal, which would repeal a law passed by the legislature in 2012. A second proposal, which would repeal a different law authorizing the hunt, is already on the ballot. Yet a third petition is being circulated by hunting and conservation groups supporting the hunt. The emerald ash borer—an invasive species that targets ash trees—has been found in brainstorming sessions, including an agreement following the May 2010 auction to (Continued on Page 2)
Split up Michigan counties in which each company would be an exclusive provider for both public and private leases.

In the five-month period following the state’s May 2010 auction, state-held leases may have been a key driver behind the state-held lease price in Michigan dropping from $1.50 per acre in May 2010 to less than $0.40 an acre at the October 2010 auction.

In light of these findings revealed through an investigation by the Michigan attorney general’s office, Encana and Chesapeake were each criminally charged for their alleged bid-rigging collaboration on March 5, 2014 in Cheboygan District Court.

Both companies have said they conducted internal investigations and found no collusion. They said their earlier discussions were related to a joint business venture that never came to fruition.

Closing briefs in the case against Chesapeake were to be filed by the attorney general’s office on May 16 and by Chesa- peake on May 23. The judge will issue her opinion after that.

spring visitor

This image of a rose-breasted grosbeak was captured recently at a birch tree fooding the Grayling area. Many colorful songbirds—as well as raptors, ducks, and other varieties—have been returning to Michigan with the warmer weather.

North Woods Notes

Encana settles bid-rigging case for $5 million

One count each of antitrust violations relating to a contract or conspiracy in restraint of commerce, a high court misdemeanor punishable by a $1 million fine for a corporation; as well as one count each of attempted antitrust violations, a misdemeanor punishable by a $1,000 fine.

Opening day and Josh Greenberg’s rivers...

Emerging Hexagenia mayfly in the silt behind the log. But when I do fish, I usually know what to do.

As I read “Rivers of Sand,” I found myself saying, “Yeah, that’s how I do it too.” And then, on the next page, I find another fly fishing tip in the story and a "Duh, why didn’t I think of that!” I’ve rationalized that well in my mind by saying to myself, “I’m just a part-time angler and Josh Greenberg is a professional.” That makes me feel better about myself. You too, will find “duh,” moments and learn.

Josh—a full time conservationist, as well—writes beautifully, thoughtfully, and finds his way through the silt streams. In one of his stories, Robert Traver’s “Testament of a Fisherman.”

“I fish because I love it,” Traver wrote, “I believe the environs where trout are found, which are invariably beautiful ...

... That touched my brain, and Josh feels and conveys that same emotion. Josh writes about what I call river music: “All this talk of rising fish, the endless variety of gurgles, burping sounds, splashes, splis... these are all emotion. Josh writes about what I call river music: “All this talk of rising fish, the endless variety of gurgles, burping sounds, splashes...""
Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Director Dan Wyant have requested detailed information on the current status of two Enbridge oil pipelines laid in the Mackinac Straits more than 60 years ago. The formal request to Enbridge Inc. and Enbridge Pipelines Inc. asks for detailed information to ensure the Great Lakes are protected from a catastrophic spill in the event of a pipeline failure. “We have a responsibility to practice good stewardship of the Great Lakes, the crown jewels of Michigan’s ecology and economy,” said Schuette. “The unique location of these pipelines, in the Straits, means failure is not an option. This request is part of a comprehensive approach to ensure we work aggressively to minimize risks and protect the lakes at every turn.” “This administration has worked hard to protect the environment and support the industries we regulate,” added Wyant. "We are asking for assurance that Enbridge is monitoring and maintaining its infrastructure. Michigan does not need another pipeline break. Our vast, vital natural resources must be protected.” An April 29 letter signed by Schuette and Wyant requests the information about the Enbridge pipelines within 60 days, including:

**Pipeline Use:**
Existing and potential uses for the pipelines in the future.

**Preventive Maintenance and Leak Prevention:**
Pipeline inspection processes and mechanisms for leak prevention, detection and control.

**Spill Response Plans:**
Company response plans in the event of a leak or spill.

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**MUCC and others challenge feral swine ruling**

The Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC)—along with other agricultural and conservation leaders across the state—were urging state officials to appeal a March court ruling that overturned an order that declared wild hogs to be an invasive species.

The order and declaratory ruling targets non-native species such as the Eurasian and Russian wild boar, and crosses produced north from winter homes in diverse locations ranging from the southern United States to Central and South America. The watch for hogs and other migrating birds—including eastern bluebirds, and chipping, savanna and vesper sparrows—was expected to continue until May 31. The public is invited to observe. Just follow the hawks and other birds of 16 species, all flying east during May when these photographs were snapped. Nearly 5,200 red-tailed hawks had been tallied so far—the largest number of birds. The total count was approaching 9,000 individual birds, all flying north from winter homes in diverse locations ranging from the southern United States to Central and South America.

**Counting Hawks**

Migrating hawks crossing the Straits of Mackinac were nearing their peak numbers in late April when these photographs were snapped. Nearly 5,200 red-tailed hawks had been tallied so far—the largest number of birds. The total count was approaching 9,000 individual birds, all flying north from winter homes in diverse locations ranging from the southern United States to Central and South America. The watch for hawks and other migrating birds—including eastern bluebirds, and chipping, savanna and vesper sparrows—was expected to continue until May 31. The public is invited to observe. Just follow the hawks and other birds of 16 species, all flying east during May when these photographs were snapped. Nearly 5,200 red-tailed hawks had been tallied so far—the largest number of birds. The total count was approaching 9,000 individual birds, all flying north from winter homes in diverse locations ranging from the southern United States to Central and South America.

**Environmental compliance meeting**

If you are responsible for making sure an organization is in compliance with Michigan’s environmental regulations, you won’t want to miss the 2014 Environmental Compliance Conference.

Registration is now open for the event, which is designed to help businesses and environmental professionals comply with environmental standards. The conference, hosted by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, will be offered in three locations—Traverse City (May 29), Grand Rapids (June 5) and Livonia (June 10).

The registration fee of $130 includes breakfast, lunch, all conference materials and a copy of the “Michigan Guide to Environmental, Health and Safety Regulations.”

The event qualifies for six continuing education hours for professional engineers. Certified municipal wastewater operators can receive 0.5 EECs in the "managerial" category for attending the wastewater track only. Environmental consultants, state and local officials and anyone else interested in learning about the subject are also welcome to attend.

For more information and to register, call Alana Berthold at bertholda@mdnr.state.mi.us, or (517) 284-6854.
Citizen action is important

Hats off to all the citizens who took their concerns about fracking on public lands to the Allegan County Courthouse in April.

It was a full house in the courtroom when Circuit Judge Margaret Bakker heard arguments in a lawsuit filed by Michigan Land Action Network against the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) (see related story on Page 2).

While at this writing the judge was yet to issue a ruling on the DNR’s request to dismiss the lawsuit involving some 12,000 acres of land in the Allegan State Game and Recreation Area, we agree with the plaintiffs that more needs to be done to protect property set aside under the public trust doctrine.

The DNR says it is required to complete public servants and agencies to take extra care and precaution when managing public resources, but we’re glad such individuals are willing to stand up and be counted.

Growing environmentalists

We know it’s impossible to please everyone all the time. But we wish agenda-driven conservationists would be quicker to give each other the benefit of the doubt.

We recently published a letter in which an individual inaccurately criticized an environmental group for being anti-hunting. A member of that environmental group responded with a somewhat curtly written denial of those charges.

At about the same time that the second letter arrived in our mailbox, the original letter-writer discovered that he may have been a little too fast on the draw with his criticism and wrote an other letter of apology for jumping the gun.

The email was accompanied by a photo of the trout—all 42 of them—lined up on the tailgate of the officer’s truck. A few of them were larger than I had ever known to exist in this creek.

How could I have forgotten such a abundantly detailed piece of information? I think I am getting older. I do forget things.

I decided I didn’t want to remember. Maybe I had blocked that in formation out. Or maybe I just didn’t care.

After all, it is only a marginal trout stream.

Trout time finally arrives on Augusta Creek

Finally, the yard has maybe two full wheelbarrows of snow left. The Phoebe Flycatchers are here. So are the Woodcocks.

After some work in the yard, it is time to “field test” some of the flies that have arrived for winter.

So, with the Jeep loaded with my gear, I head to one of my favorite local streams to once again feel the current against my legs and let Augusta creek wash away the stress of the week.

This is the true sign of spring for a trout fisherman. Hydro therapy, if you will.

It is the kind of day that a month earlier you would have ever seen—45 de- grees and not a cloud in the sky. The kind of day you might, in a month or so, be wading in March.

Not this year, of course, but it is here at last—a 30-mile drive with the windows down and a slightly giddy look on my face.

The familiar routine of stringing up the fly rod and pulling on waders was as smooth as it should be. As I walked to the bridge and stand the water, I smile. Hello to an old friend.

This stream and I go back 30 years or so, and when you get to know a body of water as well as I know the Augusta creek, you begin wondering with a sense of confidence. I no- tice a few changes in the first hun- dred yards, some downed trees. Some are across the stream and create some new cover for the trout. Lies. Not the typical kind of story telling lie fishermen are prone to, but a deep run hole or that a trout would “lay” in. A lie.

The water is unusually clear for this time of year and the amount of snow cover we had. I considered that I had not moved any fish after an hour or so. This is indeed unusual. I am not spotting any trout darting around me when I wade through some deep holes.

Though I am not disappointed in not catching fish, I am con- cerned. I know this stream well and, at this time of year, I should have at least a few “takes” on my fly.

Then I remember an email a friend sent to me last fall. It was about Augusta Creek.

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After all, it is only a marginal trout stream.
Proposed fracking rules come up short

By Katie Salau

Last week, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) proposed updates to rules to regulate fracking in Michigan, and they came up short.

Instead of meaningful regulatory reform, the rule changes were major mark-up and language changes that skirted main points of concern for Michigan LCV and many Michiganders across the state.

In particular, the proposed rules do not require companies to publicly disclose the chemicals that are added to water during the fracking process before a well is in use. This is critical public health and safety information for people living near wells, and it is not too much to ask that Michiganders are properly informed.

The suggested rules do not require all fluids used in fracking to be stored in a secure tank, nor do they require the company to disclose for about fracking operations to be tracked and displayed on the Michigan DEQ’s website.

Fracking wells use millions of gallons of Michigan’s freshwater, which is unable to be returned to the lakes, rivers and streams from which it was drawn. With so much uncertainty about the impacts of fracking and our natural resources, operators should be held to the highest standards of ensuring the quality and quantity of our fresh water.

The DEQ is falling short on setting meaningful rules. We’re continuing to pursue the details. Stay tuned for more information about a public comment period.

Letter to the editor

Gore vs. Bush: A tale of more than two houses

The “Tale of Two Houses” published in The Call in the early May edition described something circled back in 2007. While largely true, it ignores several relevant facts.

[Former President George W.] Bush has since purchased a $3 million, 8,500-square-foot home in North Dallas near the site of his presidential library. It does not appear that this new home — while modest in comparison to the other homes in the neighborhood — is a model of environmental design. The ranch house in Crawford functions as a weekend home.

People are complicated. Our public figures are inconsistent in persistent choices they make. But let’s not use that as an excuse for taking the lazy way out and concluding that Gore’s message about the importance of climate change is not true.

Climate change is the most important environmental issue of our time. And yet many people and many environmental organizations are more interested in the foibles and flaws of celebrities and public figures. Go figure.

Jay Copeland

Concord, Massachusetts

“Atmosphere of crisis” needed

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, co-chair of the recent Council of Great Lakes Governors meeting in Chicago, said “an atmosphere of crisis” is needed to bring about faster action on the Asian carp threat to the Great Lakes.

During an interview with the Great Lakes Echo, Snyder reportedly said there isn’t enough urgent concern over the issue. The region, he said, is not the only common ground and act more quickly than it has so far to solve the looming problem.

Here’s one final 2013 deer hunting story

By John Gunnell

This deer story from November 2013 has been bogging around in my head ever since because of the now forested, ice-occupied camp. The reader must realize that, when he had the deer processed, he got thirty-five pounds of venison.

This buck was also named after the original owner of our camp — while taking up residence, something circled back in 2007. As it turned out, a once-in-a-hunting-timeliness — has difficulty shifting back and re-living an event that was, as it turned out, a once-in-a-hunting-lifetime occurrence.

With only one shot, I assumed we would soon be heading back to camp about midnight with an eight-point buck. We decided that day to burn the last daylight left and look for the buck. Finally, on hands and knees, we discovered a thin blood trail telling us the deer was hit.

Anyone with any information should call (231) 533-8627.

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Anyone with any information should call (231) 533-8627.
Congratulations! It’s a trout!

The cryptic email arrived mid-morning: “Fish arriving early. Be in Mio by noon.”

We brushed our teeth and raced out the door; this rare opportunity to watch the Au Sable welcome 13,000 new members to its river family was something we didn’t want to miss.

We arrived at 11:52 a.m., and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources crew was already there, parked on the loading ramp. The truck—nicknamed “Big Ditch” by the local business—was brimming appropriately enough as “theFuture”—a sporty sizeable oxygen tank to keep those little rainbow trout alive and kicking until they were abruptly ejected into their new river home.

A quick check of the water temperature showed six degrees Celsius—about 43 degrees. The hatchery keeper nodded his head.

“It was nine at the hatchery—that’s good,” he said.

I shook my head. It sounded damn chilly to me.

I had never been to a river birthing before. A long metal pipe was put together, then attached to one of four ports to tanks holding the fish. The other end was submerged in the river near the shore, and fish started spurtling out in a hurry.

Now I don’t know how many brain cells baby trout have, but that had to have been a physical and emotional transition. Used to the concrete raceways at the hatchery, with a roof keeping out most of the sunlight, these little wonders probably found the sandy bottom of the river and the bright sun above somewhat disconcerting. Most overflowed right next to the pipe, catching their collective breath, while others dived back deeper. A few decided that this great big mother river was just too much and tried to return to the shore, but we gently persuaded them otherwise.

Within a half hour, most of the trout had headed out to explore—or hide. We wondered how many will make it in this great big river—how many will thrive and grow really, really big; how many will find special little river holes and hunker down for years; how many will make an angler’s heart sing.

The hatchery keeper’s wife, a lovely person who has watched over trout for 13 years, was amazed at the size difference among the many fish, even though they were all the same age. Just like people, we mused.

I felt like a fish mom as I kept an eye out for stragglers, trying to make sure they successfully commenced their next phase of their life journey.

Soon the truck was on its way back to the hatchery, where it would be loaded again tomorrow for another delivery. Three trucks deliver three loads of fish three days a week for several weeks each spring. That’s a lot of fish, my friends.

Fish for the future.

2014 election is shaping up

Conservation and natural resource issues expected to face a tough battle this fall in out-of-state Common Core state education, including Michigan’s Medicaid expansion as wedge issues during Michigan’s 2014 election.

The filing deadline for candidates has passed.

According to the League of Michigan Conservation Voters, no supporters show up at the last minute, but 2014 will be a year for Republican candidates, incumbents and new faces alike to duke it out for seats in the state capitol.

A total of 44 Republican primaries will take place for House seats—the second most in the last decade. Democrats in the House are facing fewer primaries than normal, topping out at 37.

Of the 44 Republican primaries on the docket, an estimated 19 incumbent state legislators will face primary challengers this year.

Michigan Information and Research Service (MIRS) reports that, since 2000, only one Republican challenger has won against an incumbent legislator.


Amash—running against Grand Rapids businessman Brian Ellis (running against Amash) and Birmingham attorney David Trott (running against Bentivolio).

In the 4th congressional district, home to U.S. Rep. Dave Camp (R—Midland), who will be retiring, a three-way Republican primary between current state Sen. John Moolenaar (R—Midland), Paul Mitchell and Peter Kowch is heating up.

In the 8th congressional district, current home to U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers (R—Howell), who is also retiring, the primary will feature former state Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop and state Rep. Tim McLimoon, a staunch tea party voice from Rochester Hills.

On the Democratic side, Deb Dingell is not facing any serious challenges in the 12th congressional district, which has been held by her husband, U.S. Rep. John Dingell (D—Dearborn), for more than six decades.

In the U.S. Senate race, former Michigan Senator Sander R. Levin (D—Dearborn) and current U.S. Rep. Gary Peters (D—Bloomfield Twp.) do not face primary challenges.

As we get into warmer weather, we will be outdoors—hiking, hunting turkey, collecting mushrooms, fishing and just enjoying the spring ephemeral wildflowers.

Traveling in the woods, we often come across turtles, especially the eastern box turtle. This is our only true terrestrial turtle.

Before we talk about this very special reptile, we should remind ourselves that Michigan law protects all turtles—except snapping turtles—from commercial harvest, and the wood, spotted, eastern box and Blanding’s turtles are completely protected.

It is very tempting to pick up these slow turtles and try to make pets of them. This doesn’t work out well in most cases.

Primarily found only in the Lower Peninsula, they are uncommon to rare in most areas. This is due to habitat loss and removing them from the environment. The main habitat is open woodland, adjacent fields, swamps and thickets near streams. As with most turtles, they are quite slow and populations have been dramatically hurt by road traffic.

Since their home ranges usually don’t exceed five acres, it is not a good idea to remove them. If they are taken temporarily, please put them back in the same area where they are found.

The box turtle can live to be nearly a century old in the wild—much less in captivity, even under good conditions.

Since the population has been decimated, the home range has gotten so small, mating may occur from spring through fall as a mate is located. The female remains fertile for a few years after mating and lays three to eight soft-shelled eggs in the ground during early summer. The eggs take 75 to 90 days to hatch. Some believe, as with snapping turtles, that if the eggs hatch extremely late in the season the young will remain below ground until the next spring.

The eastern box turtle is found in a group of “hinge” shielded turtles. The upper shell—called the carapace—is dark, with a pattern of orange and yellow. The lower shell—called the plastron—is colored yellow and has a flexible hinge which allows the shell to close totally at the front. This is needed to allow the head, tail and legs to be pulled under the shell when confronted by a predator.

Their coloration mimics the dry leaf litter of the forest floor. Male box turtles may have blue patches on the cheeks, throat and front legs. The plastron of the male is somewhat concave to aid in mating. Males often have red eyes.

The turtle’s shell is vital to its survival. The shell of the box turtle grows scale-like features called scutes that continue to grow during the life of the turtle and has growth rings. Some say that you can tell the age of the box turtle by counting the rings, as in a tree, but we have had problems doing that at the nature center. Most often when counting the rings—if the turtle is of any size—we almost always end up with 6, so we believe by experience that this technique is not at all reliable.

Eastern box turtles are omni-vores and feed on all types of plant and animal material. Some maintain that the younger turtles are more carnivorous, because they require more protein to grow.

At the nature center, we often see box turtles with either red or purple faces, because they have been feeding primarily on strawberries and blackberries.

Since these turtles eat about anything, they often consume poisonous mushrooms, which makes them poisonous to eat. This caused American Indians some problems, as they were an easy meal to catch.

Whatever you do, please leave this rare turtle in the wild.

Thanks to all of you who have renewed your subscriptions

Cannery Row

This restored structure on the beach at Glen Haven is a reminder of an early northern Michigan industry—not to mention writer John Steinbeck’s classic novel “Cannery Row,” which was set far from Michigan on the shores of California’s Monterey Bay. While Monterey has the world-class Monterey Bay Aquarium anchoring the famous location of Steinbeck’s story, Glen Haven has the legendary Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, which each year attracts visitors from all over the United States and abroad.

Rather than processing sardines—a staple of the Monterey canneries—one local business canned cherries and other fruit, then shipped it from the Glen Haven dock. Ah, sweet history.

The eastern box turtle: A herald of springtime

A male eastern box turtle —Wikipedia photo

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Whatever you do, please leave this rare turtle in the wild.

Thanks to all of you who have renewed your subscriptions
Cattle litter, a “mountain man,” various outlaws & joining in a rap music video

DISTRICT 1 (Marquette)
CO Doug Hermanson investigated an incident involving the dumping of livestock on CFA lands. A complaint was reported that several cows were dead in the area of a logging job. CO Hermanson was able to retrieve tag information from the animals and locate the owners. Enforcement action was taken against the livestock owners for the litter.

CO Marvin Gerlach received a call about a deer/deer near a residence in Menominee County. It seemed that two of one house felt sorry for the local deer and decided to start putting out some feed for recreational visits. Unfortunately for the deer, they decided to place it next to their mailbox along a high-traffic county road. CO Gerlach talked to the owners and explained that although they were not in violation of the recreational feeding laws, it was putting motorists and the deer in harm’s way by locating the deer feed too close to the road. The sources were causing a hazard and decided to relocate the feed site to a safer area.

CO Marvin Gerlach received the disposition on an illegal turkey case in Menominee County from the fall of 2013. The subject pled guilty to the illegal turkey charge in Menominee County, with no licenses. A check of the retail sales system confirmed the subject had also not purchased a fishing license last year.

CO Troy Mueller responded to a complaint about subjects deer during the closed season, and at the residence located remains of eight deer, three raccoons, a squirrel and a mink taken during the closed season or with no licenses. During the interview, he also permitted admission to shooting most of the deer out of season. A check with the retail sales system confirmed the suspect had not purchased any hunting licenses for several years. Enforcement action was taken, including seizing the firearm for condemnation.

DISTRICT 5 (Roscommon)
CO Mike Hears observed a plasma television screen on a back several miles away and located the source on Tvin Lake Rd near US 23. It appeared that the television screen was stolen and the property owner was ordered to extinguish the fire, and an arrest warrant is being sought for the unlawful disposal of solid waste.

COs Steve Lockwood and Jason McCullough conducted an investigation into a group of individuals from Ohio taking and processing rabbits and grousse from a motor vehicle. The COs did multiple interviews and eventually obtained confessions and additional evidence on numerous other animals killed during the closed season. The group had killed six deer in one day in a section of remote state land during the month of February. The kill sites were located and evidence seized. Numerous charges have been authorized against the owners in three separate counties.

DISTRICT 6 (Bay City)
CO Seth Rhodes received a Report-All-Poaching (RAP) complaint that involved subjects fishing from a vessel near the Croton Dam. As the patrol vessel became apparent to the subjects, he then proceeded to fishing pole down and looked away from the COs’ boat as it approached. The subject acted surprised to see the COs out on the water and instantly informed them, “You got me.” No fish were taken and the subject sued a ticket for fishing without a license. A check of the retail sales confirmed the subject had also not purchased a fishing license last year.

CO Dan Lee and Sgt. Kimmerly were patrolling Belle Isle when they observed a vehicle that appeared to be avoiding them. They located the vehicle a short time later as it pulled into a parking lot. The driver was suspended without warrants of Detriot after the subject was arrested, he thanked the COs for the work they are doing on the Island.

CO Jeremy Payne worked with the Michigan State Police (MSP) on a road hunting complain in Isabella County, where three subjects were diving around Isabella and Montcalm counties, taking deer, rabbits and raccoons from a vehicle. The MSP stopped and located the suspects, and found the driver to be hunting with pre-session of an uncoached loaded rifle. There were also numerous CPL violations. The COUTs and warrants were being rejected for recreational fever, taking game during the closed season, possession of game without license and 16 other game violations.

DISTRICT 7 (Plainwell)
While patrolling Allegan County, CO Michael Mohr located a subject admitting to being a commercial fisherman along with many other household objects. When contact was made, the subject indicated he had obtained a burning permit. Enforcement action was taken after an explanation was given that burning permits are only for yard waste.

CO Brad Brewer and Sgt. Zachary Doss followed up on an investigation of a deer being shot and the subjects were not obtained a permit. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 8 (Rose Lake)
While en route to the wildlife lab, CO Rich Nichols was exiting the freeway when he observed a subject fishing from a vessel near a guardrail. The vehicle continued on and CO Nichols followed it a short distance before continuing a traffic stop. The driver said he was looking down at his cell phone and lost control of the vehicle. The driver was also driving in violation of his restricted license. A ticket was issued for driving while under the influence.

CO Damon Owens and Sgt. Troy Ballhaus closed a waterfowl case where the subject was hunting without a small game license and state or federal stamp. The subject was found to have no hunting licenses and was ordered to pay fines and costs totaling $700.

CO Shane Webster reported a traffic stop of a vehicle for failing to stop at a stop sign while driving on Belle Isle. One of the passengers had a fishing license, and the driver was also not purchasing a fishing license. When questioned, the driver claimed he has not have time to go get one. CO Thorn then pointed out that his hunting partner, whom he rode with, produced a small game license purchased just that morning.

CO Todd Thorn assisted MSP in a search of a vehicle with a foot chase of two men who fled from a breaking-and-entering crime in the A.K. 90 area. The suspect’s vehicle was dispatched to the area and followed the individuals for nearly two hours. After a lengthy pursuit, the two men were located and arrested by officers as they attempted to cross a road. The men had felony warrants, had fled with Electronics from the residence, and were also charged with fleeing and elude and other offenses.

While working Belle Isle, COs Todd Thorn and Jeremy Payne were scanning a Detroit Police frequency and heard a complaint where a fast food restaurant was about to be robbed. The complaint indicated there were three people located in the parking lot of the restaurant who had readied themselves to the area and witnessed the subjects walking around the restaurant. COs contacted the subjects, one of whom is a Detroit area rapper, who explained to the COs that they were just hanging out after dark and that footage would contain a scene where he is arrested by the police.

COs Dan Walzak observed a car/deer incidents near a residence in Menominee County. Upon checking the next day, CO Goss observed several anglers as someone he had arrested several times in the past. The file check revealed the subject had three warrants for his arrest. When CO Goss made contact it was discovered that he was 19 fish over his limit. The subject showed proper documentation, four tickets and ticketed for the overlimit.

DISTRICT 9 (Southfield)
CO Mark Emmett responded to a RAP complaint regarding the illegal shooting of a Canada goose from his yard in Montrose County. After a few minutes of speaking to the homeowner and his guest, full confessions were obtained and the goose carcass was retrieved. The guest used the homeowner’s rifle with a scope to shoot the goose. The two had the breasted the goose out and were preparing to eat it for dinner that night. CO Emmett ticketed the driver with a D.U.I. The out-of-season, gave numerous warnings, and seized the rifle from the resident for condemnation.

CO Dan Walzak observed a vehicle on Belle Isle traveling in excess of the speed limit. The vehicle was pulled over and contact was made with the driver. The driver stated that he was merely driving his car to have a good time around the island for her birthday. A check of the occupants information revealed one felony warrant and six misdemeanor warrants for his arrest. The driver had 34 misdemeanor warrants for his arrest. A verbal warning was given for the speed and both subjects were lodged on their respective warrants. The girlfriend, with no warrants and possessing a valid carrier’s license, was released to finish her birthday tour of the island by herself.

While assigned to Belle Isle, CO Mike Drexler and a MSP trooper observed a vehicle on the ice and decided to take a telephone number of a suicide in progress. CO Drexler and the trooper arrived on scene within minutes of receiving the call. The trooper contacted for the subject immediately responded to the area and witnessed the subjects walking around the restaurant. COs contacted the subjects, one of whom is a Detroit area rapper, who explained to the COs that they were just hanging out after dark and that footage would contain a scene where he is arrested by the police.

CO Damon Morris and Sgt. Tim Weise assisted MSP in a search of a vehicle with a foot chase of two men who fled from a breaking-and-entering crime in the A.K. 90 area. The suspect’s vehicle was dispatched to the area and followed the individuals for nearly two hours. After a lengthy pursuit, the two men were located and arrested by officers as they attempted to cross a road. The men had felony warrants, had fled with Electronics from the residence, and were also charged with fleeing and elude and other offenses.

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Fish egg collection completed

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has completed its annual egg-take efforts, despite extreme weather conditions this spring.

Each year the DNR collects and fertilizes eggs from various fish species, including wild walleye in the Muskegon River and wild steelhead migrating to the Little Manistee River. These fertilized eggs are reared in hatcheries and rearing ponds throughout the state and eventually stocked to create and enhance fisheries in Michigan’s waters.

Of all the walleye stocked in Michigan, 100 percent comes from the Muskegon River’s egg-take efforts. Of the steelhead stocked in Michigan, 100 percent comes from the egg-take efforts at the Little Manistee River weir. The goal for 2014 was to collect enough eggs during these efforts to stock 16 million walleye and 2,000 mature steelhead.

“This is a very short window of opportunity Fisheries Division staff has to collect walleye and steelhead eggs in order to optimize survival and growth in our hatcheries and rearing ponds,” said DNR Lake Michigan basin coordinator Todd Kalish. “In a typical year, these egg-take efforts occur over the course of a week to collect and process about 600 mature walleye and 2,000 mature steelhead.”

This was not a typical year, however, given the near record water flows and flooding that has occurred in many Michigan rivers. On the Muskegon River, access sites and bridges were closed, while the Little Manistee River weir facility was threatened due to extreme erosion caused by the high water levels. As a result of these extreme conditions, Fisheries Division staff implemented emergency protocols and mobilized diverse staff resources to work unconditional hours and days to assure egg-take quotas were met.

The DNR worked all day and most of the night on April 21 to complete its annual egg-take efforts, despite extreme weather conditions that threatened many fish species, including wild walleye and 2,000 mature steelhead. A couple of sun worshippers relax on a beach in Leelanau County’s Glen Arbor Township. Scenes like this will become more common over the next few months as more people emerge from their cold-weather shelters to take advantage of warmer days.